



HOUSE OF COMMONS  
CHAMBRE DES COMMUNES  
CANADA

44th PARLIAMENT, 1st SESSION

---

# Standing Committee on Fisheries and Oceans

EVIDENCE

**NUMBER 059**

Monday, March 27, 2023

---

Chair: Mr. Ken McDonald





## Standing Committee on Fisheries and Oceans

Monday, March 27, 2023

• (1100)

[English]

**The Chair (Mr. Ken McDonald (Avalon, Lib.)):** I now call this meeting to order.

I apologize to everybody for doing this via Zoom today. Unfortunately, there was a fire at the local airport in St. John's on Friday night that put the kibosh on a lot of flights getting out. I won't get out until later this evening.

Welcome to meeting number 59 of the House of Commons Standing Committee on Fisheries and Oceans.

This meeting is taking place, of course, in a hybrid format, pursuant to the House order of June 23, 2022.

For the first hour of today's meeting, we will be studying the subject matter of supplementary estimates (C). We will then proceed to study the main estimates during the second and final hour.

Before we begin, I would like to welcome our guests, starting with the Honourable Joyce Murray, Minister of Fisheries, Oceans and the Canadian Coast Guard.

The honourable minister is joined today by officials from the Department of Fisheries and Oceans. We'll start with Annette Gibbons, deputy minister; Mario Pelletier, commissioner, Canadian Coast Guard; and Richard Goodyear, chief financial officer and assistant deputy minister. Niall O'Dea, senior assistant deputy minister, strategic policy, will be joining us for the second hour.

Thank you all for taking the time to appear before the committee today.

We'll start with the minister, who will give a five-minute opening statement to start our study of supplementary estimates (C).

When you're ready, Minister, you can start.

**Hon. Joyce Murray (Minister of Fisheries, Oceans and the Canadian Coast Guard):** Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Good morning.

I'm pleased to be here on the traditional unceded territory of the Algonquin Anishinabe nation.

I'm happy to be joined by the deputy minister, Annette Gibbons; the commissioner of the Canadian Coast Guard, Mario Pelletier; and the chief financial officer and assistant deputy minister, Richard Goodyear.

[Translation]

I'm appearing before the committee today to present the Supplementary Estimates (C), 2022-23, on behalf of Fisheries and Oceans Canada and the Canadian Coast Guard.

[English]

I will start by providing an overview of some key items and then provide more detail, where possible. Following that, I'd be happy to answer any questions that you may have.

Mr. Chair, in the supplementary estimates (C), I'm seeking \$104.2 million for a number of important items. This sum includes \$52.2 million for increased marine and aviation fuel costs for the Canadian Coast Guard, \$22.6 million for a litigation settlement and \$9.7 million from the \$100 million committed to the small craft harbours program and the ghost gear fund. This sum is for cleaning up and recovering lost and abandoned fishing gear and for recovery efforts for essential harbours affected by hurricane Fiona.

Canadians have faced a particularly challenging year. The cost of running Canadian Coast Guard ships and helicopters has increased due to the international pressures of inflation and increased fuel costs. This isn't something we can predict, nor is it an expense we can afford to cut corners on. Mariners, coastal and indigenous communities, and all Canadians rely on the Canadian Coast Guard to help keep them and their waters safe and clean.

• (1105)

[Translation]

Last year, hurricane Fiona was one of the most devastating storms ever to hit Atlantic Canada and eastern Quebec, thus further demonstrating the impacts of climate change on coastal communities. That's the new reality we must adapt to.

[English]

Hurricane Fiona damaged over 130 small craft harbours, splintering infrastructure and scattering fishing gear throughout local waters. Last October I visited Covehead Harbour in P.E.I. and saw some of this damage first-hand. I heard directly from fish harvesters and those who live in coastal communities about the impact of Fiona on their livelihoods. I saw the destroyed oyster and mussel infrastructure. It's incumbent upon our government to help clean up this overwhelming damage.

Mr. Chair, we were also required this year to settle a lawsuit related to past decisions in the amount of \$22.6 million. There is a non-disclosure clause in the settlement agreement, so I won't be able to provide more information on it.

Mr. Chair, the funding I'm seeking through the supplementary estimates (C) is essential to continue our work of protecting Canada's mariners and our marine environment. As well, it will ensure that my department can fulfill its mandate for all Canadians.

Thank you.

**The Chair:** Thank you, Minister.

We'll now go to questions from the members of the committee. We'll start off with Mr. Small for six minutes or less, please.

**Mr. Clifford Small (Coast of Bays—Central—Notre Dame, CPC):** Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Minister, I'm sure you've been made aware that there's going to be a very challenging year ahead in Atlantic Canada in the fishery, especially due to negative signals in the snow crab industry.

Last year you committed to me several times, including at committee of the whole, that the trial survey for northern cod this year would be going ahead and that this crucial information would be there to be used in the stock assessment. Will you supplement this missing piece of data by placing extra weight on the catch data submitted by fish harvesters and observers this year in the setting of that quota?

**Hon. Joyce Murray:** Thanks for the question.

We do make decisions based on best available science. That science includes the experience of fish harvesters, indigenous knowledge and the catch-per-effort data, as well as the science that's done by my ministry. We'll continue to make decisions based on science and we'll be providing TAC according to what is sustainable.

**Mr. Clifford Small:** On per unit effort catch data for northern cod, according to Mustad, which is very experienced in cod fisheries in the autoline segment, the average catch rates in the North Atlantic are nowhere near what fishers in Newfoundland and Labrador have experienced this year.

Based on that data, if a very conservative exploitation rate of 4% is desired by most industry stakeholders I've talked to, will you commit to doubling the northern cod quota this year in light of what fishermen are faced with in the Atlantic snow crab?

**Hon. Joyce Murray:** I'll commit to a quota that is based on the best available science.

As I said, when there is not the comparative trawling, we will be looking at the other data points that we utilize in combination with that as we make our decision.

**Mr. Clifford Small:** Given that we haven't had that trawl data since 2019, and we've had catch data—per unit catch data—that shows quite the rebound in northern cod, are you telling us that there's a good chance that you'll increase the northern cod quota this year?

**Hon. Joyce Murray:** First, I do understand the importance of these fisheries to coastal communities, fish harvesters and processors, absolutely. The fundamental approach is a precautionary one,

and it is based on the best available science, so we'll be establishing a quota for that stock in due course, and it will be founded on those things.

• (1110)

**Mr. Clifford Small:** Thank you, Minister.

This is another thing you're very familiar with. Much of last year's Atlantic snow crab sits in inventory, and the outlook for that industry, as I just pointed out, is grim.

The U.S. sanctioned Russian snow crab over the war in Ukraine. What have you done together with the trade minister and the Minister of Global Affairs to pressure Japan and South Korea to follow suit and stop buying from Russia when Canada has more than enough crab to fill these markets?

**Hon. Joyce Murray:** As we both agree, Canada is known for its sustainable, ethical and premium-quality fish and seafood. That's thanks to hard-working fish harvesters.

I have raised this matter personally twice with the ambassador from Japan to Canada, in fact, once at his residence at a reception. We are taking a team Canada approach, because I know other ministers, like the trade minister, are raising this issue as well and working closely with the industry and Atlantic provinces. We will stand up for our fish harvesters and our fishing industry and help export our top-quality products around the world.

**Mr. Clifford Small:** The Atlantic Canadian fishing industry is counting on you, Minister.

Last year you announced a wild Atlantic salmon conservation strategy. Since we're here on estimates, what funding have you asked for to fund this program?

**Hon. Joyce Murray:** The Atlantic salmon is hugely important, and it is our job collectively as a society and mine as a minister to work to restore the abundance of wild Atlantic salmon. They're iconic, and we want to help the stock recover and grow. The aquatic ecosystems restoration fund is providing over \$5 million over the next five years for salmon restoration activities, including in Newfoundland, with the Atlantic salmon foundation.

I must say that there are so many organizations and individuals who are committed to Atlantic salmon recovery that I look forward to working with them as well so that we amplify the impacts of the funding we're providing.

**Mr. Clifford Small:** Thank you, Minister.

Last year salmon anglers in Newfoundland and Labrador asked for a much-expanded river guardian program. You gave them one-quarter of what they asked for. When poaching is a major issue on our rivers, why did you only give them a quarter of what they need for enforcement on the rivers? If you're going to follow this policy that you allegedly have here, why don't you give the salmon stakeholders what they want in terms of enforcement on the river? Don't you think that's where we have to start first?

**Hon. Joyce Murray:** Thanks for raising indigenous guardian programs—

**The Chair:** I'm sorry, Mr. Small; your time is up.

Minister, could you provide an answer in writing if the question doesn't get a chance to be answered during the questioning? We've gone over the allotted time for Mr. Small.

We'll now go to Mr. Morrissey for six minutes or less.

**Mr. Robert Morrissey (Egmont, Lib.):** Thank you, Chair.

Welcome, Madam Minister.

I want to begin by quoting a former fishery minister from Newfoundland, the Honourable John Crosbie, who made the statement as minister that he hoped to get the decisions right for the future livelihood of fishers. That was just months before he closed the Atlantic cod fishery in 1992.

Yes, it's extremely important that ministers get decisions right for the future of the fishery that we so depend on.

This is my first question. You referenced hurricane Fiona. I had raised with you the possibility of utilizing port authorities more to roll out repair funding for their harbours. Could you comment on that? Has there been any progress made on that?

**Hon. Joyce Murray:** Absolutely, and thanks for that question, because that seized our imaginations and our empathy over the course of that hurricane.

Approximately 185 small craft harbours were in the path of the hurricane. Of those, many were impacted. DFO officials immediately were in contact with the harbour authorities and went out to assess the damage and began the task of determining the priorities to repair and rebuild. We announced \$100 million for support for the critical immediate repair work as well as to pull out and recover abandoned gear that was washed into the oceans, which creates a risk.

We've also worked very closely with provincial partners on this. We'll continue this work. About 10% of that funding was spent in the last fiscal year.

• (1115)

**Mr. Robert Morrissey:** Thank you, Minister.

It's important that we get that out as quickly as possible to get this vital infrastructure repaired and protected.

Minister, you made reference in your comments to cutting corners in the department and that you were providing funding to ensure that didn't have to be. One area that I've heard a growing level of concern about from fishers over the last number of months is illegal fishing. One of the best-managed fisheries in Canada is the

Atlantic lobster fishery. The record speaks for itself. If all fisheries were as strong and well managed, we'd have a very prosperous east coast, both in lobster and in crab.

However, my question to you, and I'm going to be candid, is in the area of illegal fishing—illegal fishing when it comes to commercial as well as indigenous fishers. What is the department's position, and how are you growing the ability of the department to enforce protection in this critical fishery? That's across the board. Illegal is illegal, and the department should be using all the steps it has in enforcement to control it.

Could you comment, Minister?

**Hon. Joyce Murray:** Conservation is, of course, the primary principle for the management of fisheries, because if we don't conserve fish, we know what happens: It undermines the fish and seafood sector in the future. Therefore, conservation is very important.

We have compliance and protection officers who are hired to enforce the regulations and the Fisheries Act for all harvesters. Any unauthorized fishing activity may be subject to enforcement action, and that's domestic and international alike. I do want to mention that there is serious concern around illegal, unreported and unregulated fishing, which hurts legitimate fisheries and takes place on the high seas. We work on that element as well with global partners.

Here in Canada, we work in coordination with municipal and provincial compliance and enforcement officers to make sure we're as effective as possible in DFO in doing that work.

**Mr. Robert Morrissey:** How has the department added to its protection enforcement capacity over the last period of time?

**Hon. Joyce Murray:** I'll turn that over to one of the officials in terms of adding to C and P budgets.

**Ms. Annette Gibbons (Deputy Minister, Department of Fisheries and Oceans):** I'm not sure that we've had a specific increase in recent years. We certainly ensure that we prioritize where our offices are, in line with fisheries that are open. We also work with communities to provide information to us as well.

We certainly are very seized with making sure that we're well aware of what's happening on the water.

**Mr. Robert Morrissey:** In the area of fishery compliance officers, could you provide to the committee what that capacity is? What is the number of compliance officers that you have today?

Does the department have plans to increase its capacity in that area?

**Hon. Joyce Murray:** We may need to provide the answer of the exact number of compliance and enforcement officers in writing.

What I can say is that soon after being appointed, I worked with the ministry to make sure we could leverage the work that our C and P officers are doing by coordinating and collaborating with other federal compliance and enforcement members such as the RCMP, as well as with provincial and local compliance and enforcement officials, so that collectively the effectiveness would be as great as possible.

• (1120)

**The Chair:** Thank you, Mr. Morrissey.

We'll go on now to Madame Desbiens for six minutes or less, please.

[*Translation*]

**Mrs. Caroline Desbiens (Beauport—Côte-de-Beaupré—Île d'Orléans—Charlevoix, BQ):** Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Good morning, Minister, and thank you for coming. I'd like to thank the other witnesses as well.

I'll begin with a question related to a study that the committee is about to undertake. In the investigations carried out by Fisheries and Oceans on the controlling agreements, it found in 2022 that over 30% of the licences did not meet the regulatory requirements.

How can the department quickly and effectively deal with the problem and plan the required funding before private investors and vertically integrated corporations get their hands on our strategic natural resources?

[*English*]

**Hon. Joyce Murray:** I'll turn it over to the officials to answer.

[*Translation*]

**Ms. Annette Gibbons:** I just want to make sure that I've understood the question properly. Are you talking about licences in terms of the names of the licence holders?

**Mrs. Caroline Desbiens:** We've been told that over 30% of the licences did not meet regulatory requirements, based on surveys of the controlling agreements. We are therefore afraid that private investors and vertically integrated corporations will take over our resources without necessarily complying with the regulations. We're told that 30% of these activities are non-regulatory and that these people can take over our resources.

**Ms. Annette Gibbons:** I don't know where that 30% figure came from, but we do conduct surveys in which we ask questions about controls, because there are regulations to be followed.

**Mrs. Caroline Desbiens:** That figure was supplied by the department in 2022.

**Ms. Annette Gibbons:** Okay.

There are new regulations on licence controls. We are currently carrying out surveys that include control questions, and we are moving forward with a number of prosecutions. These efforts are ongoing.

**Hon. Joyce Murray:** We established regulations a number of years ago to ensure, and to reassure the population, that local fishers would fish their quotas themselves rather than transferring them to others.

**Mrs. Caroline Desbiens:** Still on the subject of fishers, there would appear to be a surplus in the Quebec Fisheries Fund. Couldn't this surplus have been used to compensate fishers penalized by the closure of the herring, mackerel, flounder and yellowtail flounder fisheries so that they could make a career change? In view of the surplus, couldn't ways have been found to help them?

**Hon. Joyce Murray:** It was important for me to go to eastern Quebec to speak directly to the fishers affected by my decision to close the yellowtail flounder and flounder fisheries. According to the information I have, these fishers were given access to some crab quotas in this zone, which will enable them to fish this coming season.

**Mrs. Caroline Desbiens:** These people nevertheless lost a great deal last year and are financially insecure. Some even had to sell their boat.

Since there is money remaining in the Quebec Fisheries Fund, Could there not be a budgetary envelope to anticipate the closing of fisheries to keep things like this from happening again? Could that be included in the department's budgetary planning?

**Hon. Joyce Murray:** Am I to understand that you're asking that the Fund not be used to help fishers affected by a decline in stocks?

**Mrs. Caroline Desbiens:** Yes, in the future.

**Hon. Joyce Murray:** These funds are mainly used to restore fisheries and make the catch processing sector more efficient through innovations, in order to develop the fishing and processing industry. There are no funds that specifically target declining fisheries that had to be closed.

• (1125)

**Mrs. Caroline Desbiens:** When the cod fishery was closed, compensation was offered. A budget can be reorganized, and decisions can be made about what to do, such as focusing on innovation or research.

My question is the one the fish harvesters have been asking me. I believe we have to talk about predictability. What do you think about that?

**Hon. Joyce Murray:** There are sometimes funds for declining fisheries that we don't expect to recover very quickly, not in less than a generation, like cod. That, after all, is a situation that rarely occurs.

In fact, most of the closures are temporary, to allow stocks to recover for a few years, but there are no funds to compensate for losses during these temporary closures.

**Mrs. Caroline Desbiens:** Thank you.

[*English*]

**The Chair:** There are 20 seconds left. There's hardly time to get in the question and the answer.

We'll move on to Ms. Barron for six minutes or less, please.

**Ms. Lisa Marie Barron (Nanaimo—Ladysmith, NDP):** Thank you, Chair.

Thank you to the minister for being here. I'm very pleased that you'll be here for the full two hours. Thank you for agreeing to be here for the full length of the meeting.

Thank you to all of those who are here as well.

Currently there is very limited funding allocated to the first nations caucus as an integral part of Canada's delegation to the Pacific Salmon Treaty process. To allow for substantive first nation engagement, adequate resources are necessary. Right now, we have first nations that are carrying the financial burden in order to participate in this process.

I did send a letter, and I recognize that it was very recently. I'm not sure if the minister has had a chance.... I know that the first nations caucus has sent a letter directly, asking the minister if she will direct her attention to this matter and act swiftly to provide necessary long-term and sustainable funding to ensure that first nations are able to effectively contribute to the Pacific Salmon Treaty process, a treaty that directly impacts indigenous rights and titles.

**Hon. Joyce Murray:** Reconciliation is a top priority of our government. Fisheries reconciliation is an important priority for our department, which is why there is significant funding to enable first nations to participate in fisheries that they are interested in and may not have had access to before. I'm interested in following up on the question, MP Barron, and finding out if there's anything we can do.

With fisheries guardianship, indigenous monitoring and indigenous involvement in science and in access to fisheries, there is a wealth of support, and rightly so, for involving first nations and indigenous peoples in the fishery.

**Ms. Lisa Marie Barron:** Currently, the existing funding is \$185,605, but the First Nations Fisheries Council is asking for \$5 million over five years. As you can see, there's a big gap in the resources that are currently being provided.

Just to follow up, will the minister commit to working with the First Nations Fisheries Council to ensure that first nations—there are over 30 first nations—are provided with adequate funding to be able to fully participate in this process that impacts their treaty rights?

**Hon. Joyce Murray:** I'm certainly committed to looking into that particular request and I'm committed to working with first nations to make sure we understand their interest in the fishery and satisfy them wherever possible.

• (1130)

**Ms. Lisa Marie Barron:** Thank you, Minister.

My next question is around the PSSI, the Pacific salmon strategy initiative funding. Right now, as you know, we're seeing wild Pacific salmon stock dwindling. They're in dire straits right now, and we need to do all we can to protect and conserve this vital population.

I did send in an Order Paper question asking for the total amount of funding and a breakdown, and I received a response. It said that \$741.3 million over five years was the total amount being allocated. If we average this out—and I realize it's going to vary from year to year—it would mean we would have \$148 million per year, but for the 2021-22 year, we saw only \$15.4 million being spent.

Can the minister speak to this? As we can see, there's a big gap in the amount being committed. It looks as though we're way off track from where we should be at this time. What's being done to ensure we're getting back on track to get this funding allocated to where it needs to be?

**Hon. Joyce Murray:** Thank you.

I would say we're very much on track. The funding over five years would never imply that we would be pushing the same amount of money out the door in year one, when we are standing up all of the framework to actually deliver on this funding in the most effective way possible. It actually does mean meeting with first nations representatives, meeting with harvester representatives, meeting with the conservation community and so on, so that we know we are structuring this and creating partnerships so that this money will be as effective as possible in meeting the goal of restoring wild Pacific salmon. Of course, that is an iconic set of species we all take to heart, and it is incredibly important for food and cultural purposes for first nations, interior and coastal alike, and for all British Columbians.

**Ms. Lisa Marie Barron:** What you're saying is that people who are concerned about the current amount of funding that's been allocated can have confidence that we're going to see that funding being allocated accordingly and appropriately in a timely manner. As you can see, it's a very small amount that has actually been allocated. I just want to know that we can have confidence that it's going to happen.

**Hon. Joyce Murray:** The listeners and your constituents can have confidence that I and the department will do everything possible to make sure this funding is not just spent but spent in a way that is as effective as possible in meeting the targets and goals that have to do with the restoration and abundance of wild Pacific salmon stocks.

**The Chair:** Thank you, Ms. Barron.

We'll now go to Mr. Perkins for five minutes or less.

Go ahead, please.

**Mr. Rick Perkins (South Shore—St. Margarets, CPC):** Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Thank you, Minister and officials, for coming.

My first question, Minister, is with regard to “willing buyer, willing seller”.

When you attended committee of the whole last year, on a number of occasions you reiterated that this was the policy of the department. Again, I believe you were in the Senate for question period last week, and Senator Francis asked you a question in the context of first nations. In response, you said that willing buyer, willing seller is the basis on which you approach the decisions.

Is that the policy of the department and yours personally as well?

**Hon. Joyce Murray:** Yes, absolutely, it is. It creates predictability in the fishery. It allows all harvesters to adequately plan and prepare for their fishing seasons. It is a basis for conservation that we do not increase access when we accommodate indigenous interests in having quota, because if we were to add when access was already fully subscribed, that would constitute a conservation challenge.

**Mr. Rick Perkins:** Thank you.

Last week, in response to Senator Dagenais, who asked you questions with regard to willing buyer, willing seller and the elver fishery, you said that the temporary 14% cut—it's temporary two years in a row—to the elver quota actually came from elver fishers themselves.

The lawyer for five of the eight commercial non-indigenous elver fishermen contacted me and said, "That's blatantly false" and that five of the eight did not. In fact, they oppose it. The only elver fishers that support that cut were the elver fishers who don't fish their entire quota. The ones who do fish their entire quota—the five—opposed it. Help me understand why you would tell the Senate that elver fishers proposed this when in fact the majority of them didn't.

• (1135)

**Hon. Joyce Murray:** Thanks for that.

My understanding is that we reached out to all of the elver fishers and asked them to participate in a consultation as to how we might move forward with accommodating the first nations interest in the elver fishery. We did that through the association leadership.

What came back to me was a way forward that the elver fishers were all consulted on. My understanding is that it actually did consider those who were not fishing their full allocation, and that those were the ones who provided more of this available allocation for the indigenous peoples than those who were already fishing their full allocation—

**Mr. Rick Perkins:** Well, I—

**Hon. Joyce Murray:** I can go back and check into that—

**Mr. Rick Perkins:** I would appreciate it.

**Hon. Joyce Murray:** —but that was my understanding about how we did that last year.

**Mr. Rick Perkins:** I would appreciate it, because my understanding from the elver fishers is it's that a flat 14% across, so those who are fishing their full quota are being penalized the 14%. I'm sure they will be pleased to know that their cut is actually a lot less, given those—

**Hon. Joyce Murray:** That was my understanding, as I said, and we are doing a review of the allocation to first nations for this coming year.

**Mr. Rick Perkins:** Okay. Thank you.

Minister, I think you've issued two more elver licenses, so that's 11 in total, three of which are first nations, so I think 11% of the licenses are made up of first nations, while Mi'kmaq are only 2.7% of the population. What's the level at which you say, okay, that's enough licences relative to the overall TAC?

**Hon. Joyce Murray:** Our reconciliation fisheries are not specifically about population quotas. They are about our mandate to implement the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples and accommodate an affirmed treaty right to fish.

What I can say for this year is that there will not be a larger percentage of the total quota going to first nations, though they will have a larger amount to fish because of how we'll be managing the sustainability of the fishery this year.

**Mr. Rick Perkins:** Thank you, Minister.

On a different subject, the U.S. has set a TAC for Atlantic mackerel of almost 4,000 tonnes. I don't think you have announced a decision yet. This committee has done a report on Atlantic mackerel. Will you allow a bait fishery in Atlantic Canada this year?

**Hon. Joyce Murray:** Well, my goal is to grow the fish and seafood sector, and that means being precautionary when a fishery is in a critical zone, which the mackerel fishery is. It's in the critical zone. It also is very important for the whole ecosystem, because other important fish are depending on mackerel for their health and the health of their stocks.

I have been working to ensure that the United States leadership understands that the precautionary approach is incredibly important in managing the stock and have had several opportunities to talk to the leadership—in other words, Dr. Spinrad, who is the key administrator for the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, NOAA—to discuss how we can rebuild the stock. My understanding is that the United States has reduced their quota twice in recent years in reflection of the state of the stock, with its age structure collapsing and the egg survey showing that the recovery at this point is weak.

**The Chair:** Thank you, Minister. Thank you, Mr. Perkins.

We'll go to Mr. Hanley for five minutes or less.

**Mr. Brendan Hanley (Yukon, Lib.):** Minister Murray, thank you for being here, and thanks to the deputy minister and officials as well.

Minister Murray, I'm also going to focus on Pacific salmon, and specifically on the situation in the Yukon territory. Last summer, you took time to visit the Yukon, which was much appreciated, and engage directly with the Yukon Salmon Sub-Committee and various Yukon first nations on the critical state of Yukon salmon. As you know, we're anticipating a study in this committee specifically devoted to Yukon salmon, but a sense of urgency to address this issue remains after another dismal season last summer.

I wonder if you can describe any progress made in advancing the PSSI in general—a bit of an update—and the Yukon component in particular. If you can shed any light on recent progress with the integrated planning for salmon ecosystems in particular, I'm interested, because I note that there's one of these programs for the Yukon River system in particular.



• (1140)

**Hon. Joyce Murray:** I did go up to the Yukon, spent a number of days there and went into communities like Little Salmon Carmacks, where I heard from elders about the impact on the community of not being able to fish salmon, not being able to have summer fishing camps and not being able to teach the cultural practices to the next generation. I very much take that to heart.

I have had a chance to have two meetings with the Under Secretary of Commerce, Dr. Spinrad, of NOAA, whom I mentioned previously, specifically about concerns about overfishing of salmon on the Yukon River by the U.S. fishery at the mouth of the Yukon River.

With respect to the Pacific salmon strategy initiative, that does include Yukon, and funds will be made available for necessary work in the Yukon to help to protect and restore the Yukon salmon fishery.

Also, I work very closely with our lead official in the Yukon, who accompanied me for the days I was there and for all the meetings and who also takes to heart the need for us to do more. We're working with the province on the hydroelectric facility that is creating challenges for the migrating salmon in the south of the Yukon River ecosystem. He's very aware of the needs for support for first nations' monitoring efforts on the river and other work to help recover the species.

**Mr. Brendan Hanley:** Thank you.

I noticed that Mr. Goodyear and Madam Gibbons have been looking.... In particular, is there any information that you can provide on the IPSE, the integrated planning for salmon ecosystems, with regard to the Yukon? Has engagement with the Yukon government, Yukon officials and other leaders already taken place?

I know this is a work in progress, a kind of setting up, but if you can shed any light on that, I would be very interested.

**Ms. Annette Gibbons:** We're in the process now of consulting on the salmon strategies, the planning strategies for the year, and that will go on over the next few months. Then the ministry will make the decisions that need to be made for this year.

**Mr. Brendan Hanley:** Thank you.

**Hon. Joyce Murray:** Perhaps we could get back to you on the state of the integrated planning for salmon ecosystems program itself.

**Mr. Brendan Hanley:** I would really appreciate that. Thank you.

You mentioned meeting with American officials, including Dr. Spinrad, and I think these types of conversations are really crucial.

A number of my constituents are expressing an urgent need to engage with the Americans in a really meaningful way to try to highlight some of the key issues across the border, including quotas and this problem of relative overfishing compared to the numbers we now see. I wonder if you might be open to what I'm hearing: suggestions for a kind of a summit or a meeting to bring people together to really try to flesh this out and try to see if we can get some commitments on the American side.

**Hon. Joyce Murray:** I think that's a very interesting idea and a worthwhile one, MP Hanley, that I will explore further.

I did go to someone very knowledgeable in my own personal network about why we are finding the U.S. fishing in pooled stocks when Canada has shut the fisheries down. My understanding is that the precautionary approach that is built into the Fisheries Act does require us to be more precautionary than the approach that the Americans are still taking, which is based on maximum sustainable yield.

My view personally is that the American fisheries science and assessment process needs to catch up to the precautionary approach, and that has been the core of my conversations with Dr. Spinrad. I also raised that at the UN Ocean Conference in Lisbon last June; at COP15 in Montreal, which was about biodiversity, including in the oceans; and at IMPAC5 in Vancouver last month.

I have been raising this as something that I aspire to see, which is a parallel precautionary approach with U.S. partners in these stocks, and the idea of a specific summit is an interesting one, I think, and we'll explore that, so thank you.

• (1145)

**The Chair:** Thank you, Mr. Hanley. Thank you, Minister.

We'll now go to Madame Desbiens for two and a half minutes or less, please.

[*Translation*]

**Mrs. Caroline Desbiens:** Thank you, Mr. Chair.

I'd like to return to our elver fishers. They have been telling us that they've agreed to give up a share of their quota in exchange for compensation. They did so unilaterally and lost 14% of their quota without receiving any compensation. I would simply like to add this information to what my colleague said. This debatable situation is causing concern among the fishers, and I understand them.

On another topic, we received quite a few people at our office who told us that they have a variety of complaints about the Canadian Coast Guard. Those who have complained have not yet received a reply and have been waiting for two years already, and in some instances for seven years. A number of them are experiencing extreme hardship and I understand them.

How can such lengthy delays be explained? I see that several million dollars will be spent on dealing with litigation. I was thinking that it might be about this matter. Why should it take so long to settle Canadian Coast Guard grievances?

**Hon. Joyce Murray:** First of all, with respect to the elver fishery, I need to make an important correction. We reallocated the quotas in proportion to the fishers' quotas, and not the quantities landed. This redistribution is the same for everyone. The preferred method is willing buyer, willing seller, but when it is impossible to sell at market prices, that's not a reason that can be used to avoid allowing first nations their quota. It has to be allowed, whatever the circumstances.

I'll ask the Coast Guard commissioner to answer your second question.

**Mr. Mario Pelletier (Commissioner, Canadian Coast Guard, Department of Fisheries and Oceans):** Thank you for the question, Ms. Desbiens.

I'm not fully informed of the situation, but I believe that the meeting you requested is being arranged.

I'm not aware of all the issues, and we can't discuss specific cases. I can, however, assure you that I believe relations with the unions are extremely important. We maintain very good relations with our unions.

We're trying to deal with the cases as quickly as possible. Some of the complex ones included a grievance, a complaint, and something else. As these investigations have to be conducted sequentially rather than in parallel, that could be the reason for some of the delays. We have review committees to ensure that our approach is consistent throughout the department.

I'm in favour of dealing with such issues quickly. I'm committed to doing that.

• (1150)

**Mrs. Caroline Desbiens:** Thank you.

[*English*]

**The Chair:** Thank you, Madame Desbiens.

We'll now go to Ms. Barron for two and a half minutes or less.

**Ms. Lisa Marie Barron:** Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Thank you, Minister.

As you know, in 2019 this committee put forward a report on west coast fisheries sharing risks and benefits based on a beneficial licence model for west coast owner-operators. Sound recommendations were brought forward to this government as a result.

I recently attended, along with my colleagues Mr. Hardie and Mr. Arnold, a conference in Victoria: the Fisheries for Communities conference. We heard from fishers—indigenous and non-indigenous—processors and researchers on the impacts of the consolidation of west coast fishing licences into the hands of large, wealthy corporations, whose profits siphon funding and resources from coastal communities and local fishers. We heard, as one example, the impacts on Prince Rupert. This used to be a fishing hub, and still is, but many of the resources and amenities for commercial fish harvesters are no longer available.

I have asked this before, Minister, and I want to ask again, because I'm not seeing the implementation of the recommendations from this report. I want to ask you when we'll move forward with licensing policy reform that prioritizes local fishers and coastal communities instead of propping up corporate and speculative-investor ownership of fishing licences and quotas.

**Hon. Joyce Murray:** This is a very important project. I will reassure the member that we have already conducted preliminary consultations with industry associations, based on the committee's report on the west coast fishery. We've consulted with the First Nations Fisheries Council and fishery advisory boards and we're finalizing our approach to further consultations, because this matter is very important and affects a great number of people and businesses.

In the meantime, we've been making progress on some other related fisheries recommendations in that report. One is a national beneficial ownership survey to identify who owns what on the west coast; this is now going through final reviews and will be made public soon. We're conducting technical work to improve the accessibility of licence and quota data. We released a comparative analysis of the Atlantic and Pacific licensing policies in 2021, because that's relevant. We're also planning to improve our socio-economic data collection and transformation and conduct an analysis of DFO Pacific-region policies, practices and terms of reference for establishing commercial fishery advisory boards.

Once we get a better handle on data gaps, we'll better understand—

**The Chair:** Thank you, Minister.

**Hon. Joyce Murray:** —the issue and path forward.

**The Chair:** Thank you, Ms. Barron.

We'll now go to Mr. Bragdon for five minutes or less.

**Mr. Richard Bragdon (Tobique—Mactaquac, CPC):** Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Thank you, Madam Minister, for being here today and taking the time.

First off, I want to ask this question out of the gate: Would you agree that coastal communities, fish harvesters and those whose livelihoods depend on the health and vitality of our fisheries and waters are, perhaps, very well positioned—if not best positioned, in many cases—to advise the government on proper policy and direction as they relate to preserving the health of our stocks?

Would you agree with that, yes or no?

**Hon. Joyce Murray:** Yes, they are a very important component of the information we seek as we make decisions, because my main priority is to grow the fish and seafood sector on all coasts of Canada.

**Mr. Richard Bragdon:** Absolutely, Minister. I think we are hearing, from coast to coast, and from numerous harvesters, producers and coastal community stakeholders—those whose livelihoods and histories depend.... They have lived in these communities for generations. They want it to be there for future generations. All of us want there to be a healthy fishery and, obviously, healthy and clean waters.

One thing that has come to the surface, repeatedly is not new to our time here on the fisheries committee. It dates back to the early 1990s, around the time of the collapse of the cod fishery. I quote then-minister of fisheries Brian Tobin, who said at the time that there is “only one major player” still fishing cod: “His first name is harp and his second name is seal.” Whether it's on the east or west coast, we're hearing testimony, Minister, that is absolutely overwhelming. We have a huge challenge in the waters. Something is very discernible and detectable, and the science is definitely pointing to this. It is something that we, as a government, could address now: the pinniped challenge.

What, Minister, are you and your government doing to address the pinniped issue on both coasts?

• (1155)

**Hon. Joyce Murray:** Indeed, my goal is to sustainably grow the fish and seafood sector.

In terms of the member's question, I hosted a seal summit in Newfoundland last year that brought together indigenous peoples, fish harvesters, scientists and industry to explore ethical harvesting of seals that would utilize the entire animal and create more opportunities for Canadian seal products. I committed to more science on the part of DFO.

I will remind the member that we simply can't be reckless when it comes to seals. Reckless decisions would risk market access to critical importers of Canadian seafood, such as the U.S., and hurt Canada's reputation.

**Mr. Richard Bragdon:** Thank you, Minister.

No one would advise reckless action on this, but this issue is not something new to the table. It has been brought forward in reports going back to 1999 and 2002. Most recently, there was the Atlantic Mackerel Advisory Committee that took place in Halifax just this past March, at which we heard from DFO scientists as well as harvesters.

Overwhelmingly, the data is very clear. In fact, they found that the stomach content of grey seals in the summer, for example, was over 80% cod and herring. In the winter, we're getting statistics showing that as much as 47% of the stomach contents are mackerel. These are staggering statistics. The population at the time of the cod fishery collapse was 2.7 million pinnipeds in the water on the east coast; now that's approaching eight million to nine million pinnipeds that we know of on the east coast.

Do you not think that's having a huge damaging effect on fish stocks on both coasts? It needs to be addressed with immediacy and urgency.

**Hon. Joyce Murray:** I would like to understand whether the member is calling for a cull of seals.

**Mr. Richard Bragdon:** Minister, no one's calling for a cull. What we're asking for is that the minister listen to the key scientists as well as to the harvesters whose livelihoods have depended on this. Look at the measures that have been put in place for a meaningful harvest along the coasts that would be taken responsibly and in conjunction with what other allied nations have done. We know this is happening even along the coast of Washington state as well.

**Hon. Joyce Murray:** Thank you.

That was the very purpose of having a seal summit. It was to have the harvesters, indigenous people and the product and market intelligence people all come together to discuss how we could increase the responsible harvest of seals as a sustainable natural resource.

I do understand that grey seals have an impact on our fisheries stock.

We are doing the science. Our department has a number of very modern approaches to ensure we are doing the science. The infor-

mation collected helps us understand how seals interact with fish and are impacted by environmental changes. This is considered when fish populations are assessed.

**Mr. Richard Bragdon:** I think if—

**The Chair:** Thank you, Mr. Bragdon. You have gone over your time, actually.

I'm going to close out the first hour now with Mr. Hardie.

Go ahead for five minutes or less.

**Mr. Ken Hardie (Fleetwood—Port Kells, Lib.):** Thank you, Mr. Chair.

In order to keep us on time, I'll have just one question for the minister. It has to do with the Great Lakes Fishery Commission. There are two issues that seem to be coming up continuously.

The first one is that Canada isn't funding its fair share of the commission's work. The second one is that the Department of Fisheries and Oceans isn't committing the budgeted amount to the commission that you have authorized. That leaves the commission short of money to do what it wants to do, rather upset with Canada for not maintaining its share of the work and the funding, and some suspicions about DFO and its sticky fingers when it comes to the allocation for the commission.

I'll give you some time to respond to all of that.

• (1200)

**Hon. Joyce Murray:** First, I just want to confirm that I support the vital work of the Great Lakes Fishery Commission in dealing with the invasive species, the sea lamprey eel.

I'd like to assure the member that the funding delivery process to the Great Lakes Fishery Commission has not changed since its inception in 1956. I will say that there was a request for additional funding to bring our proportion to meet the additional funding put in by our partners, the United States, and in budget 2022 we allocated \$45 million, which is over five years, and \$9 million ongoing. The only thing that's changed in this agreement is that we have added dollars in budget 2022 to bring Canada's funding up to the proportion that was established in 1956.

We're now in full compliance with our treaty obligations. I'm proud to grow that commitment and also to be able to count on the great work that the department officials are doing in providing the in-kind science and operations to manage and minimize this invasive species.

**Mr. Ken Hardie:** You're convinced, then, that we are delivering the money that we are promising.

**Hon. Joyce Murray:** We are delivering the money that we are promising.

There is a very small component that automatically is taken by Public Works and Shared Services Canada for equipment, for computers and for procurement services. We will be reviewing that small component of \$300,000, I believe, to ensure it is appropriate, given the way the structuring of the operations and science provided by DFO are done.

**Mr. Ken Hardie:** Thank you, Mr. Chair. That's it.

**The Chair:** Thank you, Mr. Hardie, for trying to keep us to as close to the time as possible. I do appreciate that.

Our time on supplementary estimates (C) of course has run out. We will now move on to main estimates.

Pursuant to Standing Order 81(4), the committee is beginning its study of the main estimates 2023-24, votes 1, 5 and 10 under the Department of Fisheries and Oceans.

Minister Murray, you have five minutes for an opening statement, please.

**Hon. Joyce Murray:** Thank you, Mr. Chair.

As I mentioned in my earlier opening remarks, I'm pleased to be here with the committee members on the traditional unceded territory of the Algonquin Anishinabeg people.

I've previously introduced the staff, the officials and leaders from the DFO. I don't think I need to repeat that.

[*Translation*]

Mr. Chair, I'm appearing today before the committee to present the Supplementary Estimates, 2023-24, on behalf of Fisheries and Oceans Canada and the Canadian Coast Guard.

[*English*]

Again, at the end, I'll be happy to answer any questions you have.

Mr. Chair, for the 2023-24 fiscal year, I'm seeking a total of \$4.1 billion in planned spending. This requested amount represents an increase of \$124.5 million compared with the 2022-23 main estimates, last year's estimates.

This increase in expenditures is a result of changes to funding requirements for several existing and new departmental initiatives. These key initiatives include \$314 million for projects related to the Canadian Coast Guard fleet, including new vessels; \$89.8 million in new funding to support ongoing recovery efforts from hurricane Fiona; and \$73.1 million to continue our work under the oceans protection plan.

It's important to note that 433.4 million dollars' worth of decreases in other spending has offset this increase, and this includes a number of planned profile changes or previously approved funding related to indigenous programs, the modernization of the Fisheries Act, several fisheries funds, and the protection of Canada's nature parks and wild spaces. This is in addition to sunseting funding for the small craft harbours program from budget 2021.

It's important to address one of the decreases in our main estimates: the previously approved \$86.8-million funding change for indigenous programs. While this change appears significant, it's explained mainly by a planned re-profiling of funding from one year to the next and does not reflect a change in this government's commitment to reconciliation.

This type of spending varies from year to year, depending on the stage of negotiations and other influences. In this particular case, a large amount of planned spending for the 2021-22 year was re-pro-

filed into 2022-23, resulting in an unusually high level of planned spending for 2022-23 and an apparent decrease in 2023-24—apparent, but not actual.

Mr. Chair, hurricane Fiona devastated small craft harbours in Atlantic Canada and eastern Quebec.

● (1205)

[*Translation*]

After the storm, I contacted Allan Coady, the president of the Harbour Authority of Covehead, and a lobster fisherman, in Prince Edward Island, and was able to personally see the unbelievable damage to the port.

[*English*]

I'm glad our government is doing its part to support the ongoing recovery from hurricane Fiona with funding to repair critical infrastructure, retrieve lost fishing gear and help offset some of the costs with engineering assessments so that future infrastructure and harbours can withstand this current reality of climate change anomalies by being more resilient in the build-back because severe storms will probably, unfortunately, continue to be our reality going forward.

[*Translation*]

There is no doubt that Canada's oceans and marine resources are in greater demand than ever. That's why, in 2016, our government announced the Oceans Protection Plan, and that's also why the 2022 budget set aside a historic allocation of \$1.1 billion over nine years, in addition to \$70 million in ongoing funding to renew the plan and build on its successes.

[*English*]

The oceans protection plan, or OPP, is improving marine safety and environmental response on all coasts with initiatives like the marine training program to help under-represented groups access marine training. We co-launched the Coastal Nations Coast Guard Auxiliary, which currently has eight first nations participating. The OPP has given government the opportunity to partner with indigenous communities. All of these important investments contribute to keeping the waters safe, people safe on the waters, and the environment protected.

Finally, Mr. Chair, you'll notice that spending on the Canadian Coast Guard fleet is the largest item in my department's main estimates.

[Translation]

This \$314 million in funding is made up of a combination of both new and carried over funds that will supply the Canadian Coast Guard with new ships while at the same time allowing for the work needed to maintain existing operational ships. It's more than just providing the Coast Guard with the equipment it needs, and the building of these new ships will help to create good jobs here in Canada from coast-to-coast, including in Quebec.

[English]

The COVID 19 pandemic contributed to delays and higher costs in some cases. As a result, some projects are not advancing as quickly as planned, and the Canadian Coast Guard has re-profiled funding to better align with the realities of shipyard construction schedules.

Mr. Chair, the funding that I am seeking through the main estimates will ensure that my department can fulfill its mandate on behalf of all Canadians.

Thank you.

• (1210)

**The Chair:** Thank you, Minister.

Before I go to questions, I want to remind members that I'm going to have to be very strict on time in this portion, as we want to get to a couple of votes afterwards on the actual main estimates.

We'll start off with Mr. Arnold for six minutes or less.

Go ahead, please.

**Mr. Mel Arnold (North Okanagan—Shuswap, CPC):** Thank you, Mr. Chair, and before you start my time, I'd like to put forward that I've had discussions with all parties, and for the second round of this second hour, Mr. Epp would like to take the final questioning spot to allow the other parties to make sure they have their questions in.

I'd like to start my time now. Thank you.

**The Chair:** Yes.

**Mr. Mel Arnold:** Thank you.

Thank you for being here, Minister and officials.

Aquatic invasive species have been at the forefront of some of my work on this committee since I arrived here in 2015-16. Minister, we've continuously asked for adequate funding to protect against aquatic invasive species in British Columbia and we've continued to see a failure by your department on its mandate to deliver the needed prevention measures in British Columbia. Has your department worked with the Canada Border Services Agency, Environment Canada and Transport Canada on training so that border agents and officials understand the extreme threat that zebra and quagga mussels would pose to the Okanagan and the Shuswap and the entire Fraser and Columbia river systems?

**Hon. Joyce Murray:** Thank you to the member, and our government certainly understands the importance of protecting Canadian waters and coordinating efforts to prevent the spread of aquatic invasive species.

I want to reassure the member that this was a key topic of my meeting in Winnipeg last fall with the Canadian fisheries ministers from across the country. We really did commit to collectively upping our game on that, as well as working with U.S. counterparts to support us.

The 2022 fall economic statement identified \$36.6 million over five years, starting in the year that's just passed, to expand the aquatic invasive species program that DFO runs. That will enable us to undertake new activities and work with the provinces, which do a lot of this work at the borders to ensure that the protocols are in place and effective. We do need to prevent the spread of these species for the well-being and health of our ecosystems in the future.

**Mr. Mel Arnold:** We absolutely do, Minister, and we've seen little action on that.

Minister, when the Pacific salmon strategy initiative was announced in 2021, it was announced with defined objectives for the initiative and associated funding. Is that correct?

**Hon. Joyce Murray:** Yes, it committed to doing several categories of work.

**Mr. Mel Arnold:** Thank you.

Earlier this year, the committee was informed that the PSSSI Habitat Restoration Centre of Expertise had been launched, with key actions taken to date focused on program staffing and setting implementation objectives. In 2016, Minister LeBlanc promised British Columbians concrete action to support and restore wild Pacific salmon, but in 2023 your department is still focused on staffing and setting objectives.

Why is it taking so long?

**Hon. Joyce Murray:** Well, I will remind the member that we had a massive emergency in British Columbia with the Big Bar slide. I would say that it absorbed not just tens of millions of dollars but a lot of science and other talent and capacity in the Department of Fisheries and Oceans as well.

Second, we have committed to the \$647 million of the PSSSI. For the first year, we are taking the time to consult as we set it up and direct it towards outcomes and objectives so that every dollar can be as effective as possible.

**Mr. Mel Arnold:** When the PSSSI was announced in 2021, components such as the Restoration Centre for Expertise, harvest transformation, BCSRIF funding, increased hatchery production and other investments were identified as part of the PSSSI vision.

In 2022, we learned that PSSSI funds were being allocated to flood recovery in the Fraser Valley. Although clearly it has been necessary, this was not part of the original PSSSI announcement. Earlier this year, we learned that PSSSI funding has been directed to other initiatives that were not identified with PSSSI when it was announced. There are new components, such as the Pacific Salmon Science Data Centre and the conservation and protection international compliance program.

Minister, which investments identified in the original PSSSI announcement are being displaced as your office allocates PSSSI funds to new recipients?

• (1215)

**Hon. Joyce Murray:** None. We have already funded—

**Mr. Mel Arnold:** Okay. If you say “none”, we'll move on.

Although PSSSI funds are significant, they're also limited. Where are PSSSI funds being moved within PSSSI to cover the new allocations?

**Hon. Joyce Murray:** Any of the projects the member mentioned are about achieving the objectives of restoring and protecting wild salmon. I expect that what would have been identified as exactly how to do that at the outset will be changing as we learn more, do the science and begin the implementation.

I don't see this as an absolute fixed situation. We need to protect and restore wild salmon. We have a number of years of funding to do just that. We'll continue to work on our plan to be as effective as possible.

**The Chair:** Thank you, Mr. Arnold. Your time is up.

We'll now go to Mr. Cormier for six minutes or less, please.

[Translation]

**Mr. Serge Cormier (Acadie—Bathurst, Lib.):** Thank you, Mr. Chair

Thank you, Minister, for joining us today.

For me, spring means the start of the fishing season in my region. I see the crab and lobster fishing boats going by in Caraquet Bay in front of my house as they head offshore to get the season under way. For the past five years, we have been dealing with the challenge of protecting right whales, and I think that we did extremely well in that regard. We also need to acknowledge the amazing work done by the fishers themselves to modernize their fishing methods.

Every year, we do our utmost to break up the ice in my region's ports, which is a bit problematic because as you know, the ice has been staying around a little longer. We experienced a few minor challenges this year in terms of the equipment we had been promised, but that's now been dealt with. I am even happy when I see the *Judy LaMarsh* icebreaker entering Caraquet Bay for the first time every year.

Will we, once again this year, have a simultaneous fishing season, meaning when the crabbing season begins at the same time for everyone in all the provinces?

**Hon. Joyce Murray:** Thank you for the question.

The *Judy LaMarsh* icebreaker definitely makes a strong contribution to opening New Brunswick's ports, because we know that it's preferable for all the fishers to begin at the same time. This spring, the season began earlier than in previous years, but I'm going to ask the deputy minister to give us the exact opening dates

**Ms. Annette Gibbons:** They were announced for two regions last week. The others will follow.

**Mr. Serge Cormier:** Deputy Minister, I don't want to spend too much time on it, but the fishery opening date has not yet been announced for this year. Normally, the ice committee, as we call it, meets with officials and fleet delegates.

Once again, Minister, I'd like to thank you for the efforts that were made this year. If you would like to answer my next question, feel free to do so. Otherwise, the officials with you could answer it.

Crab and lobster fishing licences are becoming increasingly expensive. They can now cost between \$10 million and \$15 million. There are even rumours to the effect that it might reach \$20 million. For comparison, when my father fished lobster, a licence cost \$75,000 or \$100,000. Now it has got to \$1.5 million in most instances.

For a number of years now, more and more crabbing licences held by people in New Brunswick are repurchased by people from elsewhere. The department's officials appear to be turning a blind eye to it, and hiding behind policies and what are called residency criteria. Let me give you some context.

Someone in New Brunswick who wants to buy a crab fishing licence in Quebec must have been a resident of Quebec for two years. However, when someone from Quebec, Prince Edward Island or Nova Scotia wants to buy a crab fishing licence in New Brunswick, they only need to have resided in New Brunswick for six months. This residency criteria disparity allows many people in other provinces to acquire fishing licences in our region, New Brunswick. These licences therefore now belong to people who live somewhere other than in our region, which is extremely harmful to the coastal communities.

The intent of the new Fisheries Act was to enable owner-operators to harvest within the terms of their licence, but the spirit of the act was also that these licences should remain in our communities. And yet there appear to be more and more licences leaving our communities, and it's that residency criterion that is making it so easy to sell these licences.

Minister, is your department prepared to change the residency criterion for New Brunswick? If so, when can we expect it?

• (1220)

**Hon. Joyce Murray:** Thank you for that question.

Firstly, the licence market is not determined by Fisheries and Oceans Canada. As the fisheries become more profitable, the licence prices go up.

[*English*]

As for harmonizing the residency criteria among the provinces, my officials may have some information about that. From my perspective, that may be something set by the provinces themselves. If it is something within the control of DFO, we would certainly look at your concern and provide a response.

**Mr. Niall O'Dea (Senior Assistant Deputy Minister, Strategic Policy, Department of Fisheries and Oceans):** Briefly, we have an existing licence transfer policy that has been accepted by the industry. They have not, at this point, asked to modify that policy, but we are certainly willing to review it, should that request come forward.

**The Chair:** Thank you, Mr. Cormier.

We'll now go to Madame Desbiens for six minutes or less.

[*Translation*]

**Mrs. Caroline Desbiens:** Thank you, Mr. Chair.

I'd like to get back to funding for the Canadian Coast Guard Auxiliary. We've been told that a budget of \$314 million will be allocated to the Canadian Coast Guard, but is a portion of this budget for the Auxiliary Coast Guard?

I'll tell you why I'm asking. I'm just back from a conference on water, where I argued that the St. Lawrence River, because it is so wide and swiftly-flowing, is complex to navigate. There are accordingly a lot of incidents that regularly require a safety intervention. Very often, in the Lower St. Lawrence area of Quebec, it's the Auxiliary Coast Guard that intervenes.

I met these people, and they're fantastic. They do their work on a volunteer basis, put everything into it, and are passionate about what they do. And yet, they end up having to pay \$5,000 or \$6,000 out of their own pockets to carry out these safety interventions on the river. Not only that, but with the cost of everything increasing, I would imagine that it's going to be even more expensive for them in the coming years.

Did the last budget provide any funding for the Coast Guard Auxiliary? I can confirm that the people there are waiting to hear.

**Mr. Mario Pelletier:** Yes, the Coast Guard Auxiliary is an essential partner in our search and rescue system, as you pointed out. We have 4,000 volunteers and a thousand units across Canada.

For the first time in a long time, our budget for the Coast Guard Auxiliary will be increased. With the oceans protection plan, we were able to obtain additional money because the ships are bigger and cost more to operate. We have a contribution program for members of the Coast Guard Auxiliary, which we can use to reimburse their expenses on insurance and fuel for their search and rescue exercises and operations.

• (1225)

**Mrs. Caroline Desbiens:** I see that there is an increase, and it's definitely welcome, because these are important players on the St. Lawrence River.

Does it also apply to first nations?

**Mr. Mario Pelletier:** There is a specific initiative, the Coastal Nations Coast Guard Auxiliary, as well as the Coast Guard Auxiliary we are familiar with, which operates in five different geographical regions.

There has been investment in the Arctic, where we more than doubled our capacity. We also have a program that could be very beneficial for volunteers. Under the indigenous community boat volunteer program, contributions will make it possible for us to purchase small boats and equipment to be transferred to the communities so that they can use them in search and rescue operations.

**Mrs. Caroline Desbiens:** That's good news.

**Hon. Joyce Murray:** I'd like to add that I spent an entire morning a few weeks ago in an icebreaking activity aboard an icebreaker on the St. Lawrence River. The purpose of the exercise was to demonstrate the importance of these operations to the communities, including yours, and others located close to the St. Lawrence. It was very interesting and I thank the commissioner for having invited me to take part.

**Mrs. Caroline Desbiens:** It must have been exciting.

Among all the recommendations made concerning science, the department intends to fund scientific research and the concrete participation of the fishers who prepare survey catch reports as they fish.

However, if it's no longer possible for Quebec's fishers to fish for mackerel and herring, how can one expect to fund their participation in stock surveys? These fishers have contributed enormously to these activities over the years. How will you conduct the surveys now?

[*English*]

**Hon. Joyce Murray:** The department always makes decisions using the best available science, which is the data of scientists, indigenous knowledge and also the experience of fish harvesters and catch-per-unit-effort. When we're not able to do a comparative trawl, which is the case in some of the fisheries right now as we re-establish the ships that are needed for the Canadian Coast Guard, we have data going back, in some cases, many decades, and so we use those data series as well and pull together the best available science.

[*Translation*]

**Mrs. Caroline Desbiens:** We can't compensate fishers who survey the resource in the field and there's no option other than getting the department's scientists to do it. In short, you're saying that the fishers were required to measure the resource over all these years, but that suddenly, from one day to the next, we can do without them. Is that right?

[English]

**The Chair:** I'm sorry, Minister, but I will have to ask you to send that to us in writing, as we have gone over the time.

I want to go to Ms. Barron for six minutes or less. Go ahead, please.

**Ms. Lisa Marie Barron:** Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Minister, on January 30 you received a letter from 16 professors and research scientists who have cumulatively published over 1,500 peer-reviewed scientific papers. They have many decades of experience in science advice and processes across various levels of government.

Those who signed this letter expressed deep concern about the recently published DFO science report on the presence of sea lice on wild juvenile salmon and a diminishment of the association of sea lice from nearby salmon farms. They stated that this report is flawed and its conclusions unsupported. They used a couple of examples. The report included contributors who were almost all aquaculture-focused DFO staff with a mandate to support aquaculture development. A second point, among many others, is that the report downplays a large body of peer-reviewed research that has repeatedly demonstrated the relationship between salmon farms and sea lice on wild juvenile salmon.

I'm wondering whether the minister can speak to what she is doing to ensure the scientific advice used in decision-making processes meets the very basic scientific standard of credibility.

• (1230)

**Hon. Joyce Murray:** Well, first, I want to confirm that we have excellent scientists and very committed public servants doing science on behalf of the Department of Fisheries and Oceans.

Yes, recent science indicates there is some uncertainty about the risks of Atlantic salmon aquaculture farms, particularly to juvenile and migrating salmon.

I was reflecting on advice from Canada's chief science advisor in the 2018 report on DFO science, as well as the new science that has come out showing the challenges for wild Pacific salmon. I think a review of our science process, consistent with the advice of Dr. Nemer, is something I'll be discussing with the officials.

**Ms. Lisa Marie Barron:** Thank you, Minister. I would agree that there are many excellent scientists employed by DFO who are doing great work. This is more focused on the decision-making process and which science is being considered and which is not.

Could the minister clarify whether she agrees with the concerns brought forward in this letter by these 16 professors?

**Hon. Joyce Murray:** I certainly took into account the fact that there was more recent science showing there may be risks to the wild Pacific salmon from pathogens and parasites.

The other aspect I took into account is that these fish face cumulative impacts that are outside of our control, such as climate change, habitat loss and, in some cases, pollution and vessel traffic. These cumulative impacts mean I have to manage the ones within my control. The viability of wild Pacific salmon is a critical, existential requirement on the west coast because of its importance to

indigenous peoples—coastal and interior alike—and the British Columbia public.

**Ms. Lisa Marie Barron:** Thank you, Minister.

You listed some of the impacts on wild Pacific salmon. I agree fish farms are one component of these impacts. However, earlier you also discussed the importance of following the precautionary principle. Currently we have sound research and evidence that there are harms as a result of fish farms on wild Pacific salmon.

With the precautionary principle being considered here, why are we still seeing open-net fish farms in our waters that continue to harm our surrounding marine ecosystems?

**Hon. Joyce Murray:** As the member is aware, I recently took a decision not to re-license 15 salmon aquaculture facilities in the Discovery Islands, and our government has committed to transition from open-net pen salmon farming on the Pacific coast in reflection of the concerns she mentioned.

I am aiming to have that transition plan available within the next six months or so. We've been consulting very extensively with first nations, communities, the industry, environmental groups and others on how that plan should be formulated and what it should include. I look forward to having more discussions on that plan once it's been made public.

• (1235)

**Ms. Lisa Marie Barron:** Thank you, Minister.

I was reflecting as well on that piece around the importance of a real jobs plan for those communities that are impacted.

We know that we need to be moving forward at a very rapid pace to get these fish farms out of the water. It should have been done long ago. However, coastal communities can't bear the brunt of the impacts of those fish farms coming out of the water. What have you heard to date on what options will be provided to local communities, both financially and with training and alternatives to opening up fish farms, alternatives that specifically eliminate interactions between open-net fish farms and the surrounding marine ecosystem? What can we share with coastal communities about what that plan will look like and when it will be implemented?

**The Chair:** Thank you, Ms. Barron. We'll have to try to get an answer to that question in writing from the minister, as your time has gone a little bit over.

Mr. Arnold, you did ask for Mr. Epp to move further down the line, so I presume that I'm going now to Mr. Small for five minutes or less.



**Mr. Mel Arnold:** No, Mr. Chair. We're asking that the other parties take their slots first. We'll be going to Mr. Epp after the other parties have their rounds in this second round.

**The Chair:** All right.

We'll go to Mr. Kelloway for five minutes or less, please.

**Mr. Mike Kelloway (Cape Breton—Canso, Lib.):** Thanks, Mr. Chair.

Hello, Minister, and hello to everyone who is here today.

My questions are around the oceans protection plan.

In 2016, our government launched the oceans protection plan. I know that it's being reviewed now. I'm wondering, Minister, if you could speak to some of the successes of the program. In addition to the renewal, though, I understand that the OPP is being improved. I wonder if you could speak to some of the improvements.

**Hon. Joyce Murray:** Thank you for that.

As a coastal British Columbian, I found it unique and very satisfying to see the government put forward the \$1.5-billion investment in the oceans protection plan, which brought together a historic combination of ministries, from the Ministry of Transport to the Ministry of Fisheries and Oceans, Environment and Natural Resources, to figure out how we could best protect the Pacific coast. One of the things that came out of that was the reopening of Canadian Coast Guard stations on the Pacific that had been closed in the previous decade.

The reason I call the oceans protection plan significant is that it is a holistic approach. Rather than thinking department by department or problem by problem, which really is the more conventional way of looking at this, the holistic approach looks at how we protect the oceans and what we are protecting them from.

The amount of marine traffic is only increasing, and that creates the risk of spills. Abandoned vessels create risks to the oceans. There are safety concerns in the oceans. Fundamental to doing a better job is improving data on the marine environment—that was a big part of the oceans protection plan—and understanding how oil behaves and breaks down and what the best ways are to deal with it under different marine conditions. The oceans protection plan funded over 60 projects to restore coastal aquatic habitats through the coastal restoration fund, so \$2 billion was historic—it was \$1.5 billion, and we recently added \$2 billion to continue that work.

One of the key initiatives that were funded through that, which I think was extremely significant, was to develop an opportunity for coastal indigenous communities to participate in their historic activity, which is protecting the oceans and the mariners on them. We have provided funding of more than \$12 million to over 40 indigenous communities to purchase search and rescue boats and equipment to be able to participate in the marine emergency response of the Canadian Coast Guard Auxiliary. We co-launched the Coastal Nations Coast Guard Auxiliary, the first indigenous-led auxiliary organization, with units in eight first nations communities along the B.C. coast.

I want to say that this set of work represents an integrated approach. I want to acknowledge the leaders of the Canadian Coast

Guard for really moving outside of our typical and traditional approach and becoming partners with first nations on all three coasts.

Last, I'll just mention that I had a chance to spend a week in the Arctic, along with the acting regional director general of the Fisheries branch for the Arctic and with members of the Canadian Coast Guard. I went to a Coast Guard base in Rankin Inlet, where the captain of the ship was a young Inuit woman, with other Inuit and women on her crew. It was so important for them to be able to be part of protecting people and protecting waters through the support of the OPP in the Arctic.

• (1240)

**Mr. Mike Kelloway:** That's great.

Mr. Chair, how much time do I have left?

**The Chair:** You have 40 seconds and counting.

**Mr. Mike Kelloway:** Okay.

The opposition said I had five seconds, but I believe you, Mr. Chair, always.

**The Chair:** Thank you for that.

**Mr. Mike Kelloway:** Just quickly, I wonder if you can give us an update, Minister, on our commitment to protect 25% of the marine areas by 2025 and the importance of the goal. I'll probably just stay there, because that's about the amount of time I have.

**Hon. Joyce Murray:** Canada aims to be a global leader in protecting the marine areas. Why? It's because we need to do this for our next generations. The impacts on oceans of shipping and other activities are only going to increase. By having 25% of the oceans protected, we...and recently, an agreement was signed that it's in the high seas as well, so Canada is well on the way to our 25% target in our coastal areas. What that does is that by protecting the seabed floor from activities that might disrupt it, we restore fisheries abundance, and those fish then spill out of the marine protected areas and make it possible to grow abundance in our fish and seafood sector, which is a very important priority for my ministry and for me.

**Mr. Mike Kelloway:** Thank you, Minister.

**The Chair:** Thank you, Minister.

Thank you, Mr. Kelloway. That was a long 40 seconds.

We'll go to Madame Desbiens now for two and a half minutes, please.

[*Translation*]

**Mrs. Caroline Desbiens:** Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Minister, I'd like to return to the protected marine areas. We were very happy to learn that the Saguenay—St. Lawrence Marine Park was going to be expanded. It will include the canal on the south shore of Ile aux Coudres, but unfortunately not the north shore. That is somewhat worrying to us because it's the side that gets all the major marine traffic, where there is the most noise, and where the beluga whales swim, as they follow the schools of capelan. I couldn't let this go by without mentioning it. That's a subsidiary issue I wanted to mention and I intend to voice our concerns to the Minister of the Environment and Climate Change.

However, while marine parks are being opened and marine areas are being protected, we are allowing 50 oil extraction wells under the Bay du Nord project, when we know that the noise is highly toxic to mammals. It has been demonstrated for belugas, and I think it's also the case for right whales and many other mammals and species.

Can you explain how both of these things can coexist?

[English]

**Hon. Joyce Murray:** In Canadian protected areas, there are four things that are not permitted. Those include dumping at sea, exploration drilling for oil and gas, and two other things.

We do have some commitments that invasive activities will not be taking place while fishing, and other activities can take place. We're in the process.

I don't believe Bay du Nord is in a protected area.

● (1245)

[Translation]

**Mrs. Caroline Desbiens:** The Bay du Nord project is not in a protected marine area, but in the ocean where all kinds of species and mammals live. Historical data have shown that even right whales swim in these waters. It's a matter of some concern to us and our fellow citizens living near the St. Lawrence River and the Gulf.

I think my speaking time has run out. I wouldn't want to try for more, because I tend to be very disciplined.

[English]

**The Chair:** Yes. Thank you, Madame Desbiens.

We'll now go to Ms. Barron for two and a half minutes, please.

**Ms. Lisa Marie Barron:** Thank you, Mr. Chair.

I've heard the importance of addressing abandoned and derelict vessels that remain a huge environmental concern along the coasts of British Columbia mentioned once already today. We know that these sinking and polluting vessels threaten food security for coastal communities and also the sovereignty of first nations as they contaminate traditional food supply and pollute our surrounding marine ecosystems. They are a danger in our waters. They're an eyesore along our coasts, as you know.

In January of this year, we saw that a vessel that had sunk and was abandoned was reported as spilling large amounts of fuel into the water for over a month. It caused chronic contamination, with fuel spilled on the beaches and other valuable ecological areas in a

provincial park with no response. The Snuneymuxw Marine Division, which is nation within my riding of Nanaimo—Ladysmith, was not even informed of the incident by the Canadian Coast Guard.

We know that there are solutions being brought forward. Will the minister commit to working with other government departments and first nations—including Snuneymuxw—to finally put into place mechanisms to prevent vessels from being abandoned in the first place, to ensure that derelict vessels are not polluting our coastlines and to respond in a timely manner to mitigate environmental damages that may result?

**Hon. Joyce Murray:** First I'd like to say that only under our government was legislation created to address abandoned and derelict vessels, which was a huge step forward. The Canadian Coast Guard and DFO have been doing some very difficult and complex work to ensure that when abandoned vessels are at risk of leaking oil into the seas, that oil is removed and cleaned up.

If there are specifics about the incident that the member is referring to, I'll turn it over to Mr. Pelletier to address.

**Mr. Mario Pelletier:** Unfortunately, I don't have the specifics of that case, but I do have to recognize that we did get money through the oceans protection plan to address some of those vessels of concern. We did an inventory. There are about 2,000 across Canada. We did a risk assessment, and we'll address them one by one as resources are available. It's something that's of huge concern that we're putting the right effort into.

**The Chair:** Thank you, Ms. Barron.

We'll now go, if I have everything correct in my schedule, to Mr. Epp.

You have five minutes or less, please.

**Mr. Dave Epp (Chatham-Kent—Leamington, CPC):** Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Thank you, Minister, for appearing.

I'd like to begin by addressing some questions to you, Mr. Goodyear. I'm limited by time, so I'd ask that you respect my questions with some brevity.

On December 2 you told this committee that the Great Lakes Fishery Commission's 2023 budget had been set. In fact, the transcript shows that you said, "The budget for GLFC has been based on the negotiation between the two nations and is set, of course, with the inclusion of the commission."

Is this a correct characterization of your testimony to this committee, yes or no?

**Mr. Richard Goodyear (Chief Financial Officer and Assistant Deputy Minister, Department of Fisheries and Oceans):** Mr. Chair, thank you for the opportunity to clarify my response from December 2 as to the status of the Great Lakes Fishery Commission budget.

Based on the information that was made available to me at the time, I was aware that the funding set forth in budget 2022, which was an additional \$44.9 million—

**Mr. Dave Epp:** I'll get to that. Was that your testimony to the committee?

**Mr. Richard Goodyear:** Yes, that was my testimony.

**Mr. Dave Epp:** Thank you.

I just want to remind the committee that's the first time—at the November meeting—that a commission budget was not ever set.

Next, is the GLFC's 2023 budget—the one covering the 2023 field season—set as of today? Just answer yes or no, please.

• (1250)

**Mr. Richard Goodyear:** To my knowledge, the budget has not been set for GLFC.

**Mr. Dave Epp:** As you were starting to say before, the Minister of Finance in 2022 did allocate \$19.605 million for each of the fiscal years through 2026-27. It's composed of \$10.625 million from the 2021-22 budget, plus the additional allocation of \$8.98 million, specifically expressed as the \$44.9 million over the five years. Then all that funding goes to A-base funding, post 2027-28, from the Government of Canada to the budget to the commission.

Is this correct, yes or no?

**Mr. Richard Goodyear:** The funding as identified by the honourable member, \$44.9 million over five years and the \$9 million ongoing, is correct.

**Mr. Dave Epp:** Thank you.

How much of Parliament's new allocation to the GLFC does the DFO plan to withhold in fiscal year 2024?

**Mr. Richard Goodyear:** Mr. Chair, thank you for the question.

DFO does not withhold funding. DFO maintains funding to deliver sea lamprey control on behalf of the GLFC. The remainder of the funding, approximately \$11.4 million of the \$19 million, will be provided to the GLFC for its important mandate.

**Mr. Dave Epp:** Has that withholding been approved by the GLFC board and commission?

**Mr. Richard Goodyear:** Again, DFO does not withhold funding. We simply provide the sea lamprey control on behalf of the GLFC at an amount that's agreed upon and negotiated with the GLFC.

**Mr. Dave Epp:** Then have the agreed-upon amounts for 2023 been set? The budget has not been, because the commission has not met since November of 2022.

**Mr. Richard Goodyear:** In response to that question, the funding is available. It's now in the hands of the GLFC to determine its budget going forward. Of course, it's not DFO's business in terms of setting the budget for GLFC, but in terms of funding available, all the funds that are required from a Canadian perspective are available.

**Mr. Dave Epp:** Have the funds that the minister alluded to, the \$300,000; been approved by the commission—the withhold?

**Mr. Richard Goodyear:** The question with respect to the funds that the minister referred to is about funds that were provided to PSPC and SSC before being provided to DFO in fiscal year 2022-23. Going forward, we're going to work with central agencies, as the minister mentioned, to ensure that the entirety of the \$8.9 million will be provided to the GLFC as identified—

**Mr. Dave Epp:** On what authority did you withhold, then, for this past budget? Parliament passed the budget back in 2022. Parliament supersedes that authority, does it not?

**Mr. Richard Goodyear:** I'm sorry. Which fiscal year are you referring to?

**Mr. Dave Epp:** It's last year: Your note of November 29 to the commission identified \$5.8 million that DFO was going to unilaterally withhold.

With that, I'll follow up.

It seems that the DFO is in a clear conflict-of-duties situation. It may even be possible that the DFO's actions on the GLFC's budget represent a breach of its fiduciary duty to the commission via Canada's appointed commissioners. These are serious and ethical lapses that may violate Treasury Board rules and the privileges and immunities of the binational body, as they undermine our credibility with our U.S. partners.

Mr. Chair, at this point, I would like to move a motion, as follows:

Whereas the Department of Fisheries and Oceans appears to be in a structural conflict of interest/conflict of duties situation concerning their relationships with the Great Lakes Fishery Commission; and

Whereas the Department of Fisheries and Oceans appears to be confusing their role as a contractor OF the Great Lakes Fishery Commission, with their function as the portfolio administrator (of the) machinery of government source) of the Canada/US Convention-based organization; and

Whereas the Department of Fisheries and Oceans is providing the Machinery of Government functions by which funding is provided from Parliament TO the Great Lakes Fisheries Commission via the Treasury Board; and,

Whereas, the full funding allocated in Canada's 2022 Spring budget, consistent with our obligations under the 1954 Convention on Great Lakes Fisheries, was not fully transferred to the Great Lakes Fisheries Commission, without hold-back, [and] in compliance with the terms of the binational Convention;

Be it resolved that the Committee directs the Chair to undertake all parliamentary efforts and steps necessary to formally ask the Auditor General of Canada to undertake a governance and conflict of interest/duties audit into the Department of Fisheries and Oceans with respect to its role as the Machinery of Government Agent for the Great Lakes Fishery Commission, and for the execution of Canada's commitments under the 1954 Convention on Great Lakes Fisheries; and determine if Global Affairs Canada would be a more appropriate agent to provide conflict-free support and to function as the Machinery of Government source for the Great Lakes Fishery Commission.

I so move, Mr. Chair.

• (1255)

**The Chair:** Thank you, Mr. Epp.

I see a hand waving in the distance.

I will ask the clerk if this motion has been provided to members of the committee in both official languages.

Mr. Kelloway, I know that you had your hand up, but I'd like the clerk to advise us on that first, please.

**The Clerk of the Committee (Ms. Christine Sing):** Yes, the motion has been distributed in both official languages.

**The Chair:** Thank you for that.

Go ahead, Mr. Kelloway.

**Mr. Mike Kelloway:** Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Thanks to the member opposite.

Given the fact that we have the minister here and that we just received the motion about 10 minutes ago, I move that we adjourn debate.

**The Chair:** We have a motion to adjourn debate, which I believe is non-debatable.

I'll ask the clerk to record the vote, please.

(Motion agreed to: yeas 6; nays 5)

**The Chair:** The motion to adjourn debate has passed. It will stay on the Order Paper for the next meeting and be dealt with at that time.

I want to remind members that we have a hard stop for the House resources at 1:02 p.m. We won't have any resources to run beyond that point.

We should get to the votes on the actual main estimates, because there are only four minutes left.

I'll allow the minister and her officials to leave at their convenience as we do the votes on the main estimates.

Okay. We'll move on.

I believe Madame Desbiens had her hand up.

[*Translation*]

**Mrs. Caroline Desbiens:** Will we be receiving the motion by email, Mr. Chair?

[*English*]

**The Chair:** It will be distributed by email afterwards, if you haven't already got it, in both official languages.

I would like to remind everyone that this will remain on the Order Paper, and any member of the committee can bring it up at a subsequent meeting of the committee.

Of course, now I have the main estimates. As I said earlier, we could have up to three votes. All three votes were referred to the committee in the main estimates.

Unless there is any objection, I will seek the unanimous consent of the committee to group the votes together for a decision.

Is there unanimous consent to proceed in this way, or do you want each one done separately?

• (1300)

**Mr. Mel Arnold:** We are good with grouping them, Mr. Chair.

**The Chair:** Okay. If we have that, we'll move on.

DEPARTMENT OF FISHERIES AND OCEANS

Vote 1—Operating expenditures.....\$2,010,994,201

Vote 5—Capital expenditures.....\$1,381,611,297

Vote 10—Grants and contributions.....\$532,401,762

(Votes 1, 5 and 10 agreed to on division)

**The Chair:** Shall I report the votes back to the House?

**Some hon. members:** Agreed.

**An hon. member:** On division.

**The Chair:** We will continue our study on pinnipeds on Thursday.

I want to recognize and thank the minister and her staff for appearing before the committee today, even though they are not in the room now. Hopefully, they'll know that we did thank them for that.

I wish to thank everybody for making this such a great meeting today. I apologize, again, for not being there in person. I want to thank the clerk, the analyst, the translation team and all the table staff for all their help in making this meeting such a success.

Hopefully, we'll see each other on Thursday.

The meeting is adjourned.







Published under the authority of the Speaker of  
the House of Commons

### **SPEAKER'S PERMISSION**

---

The proceedings of the House of Commons and its committees are hereby made available to provide greater public access. The parliamentary privilege of the House of Commons to control the publication and broadcast of the proceedings of the House of Commons and its committees is nonetheless reserved. All copyrights therein are also reserved.

Reproduction of the proceedings of the House of Commons and its committees, in whole or in part and in any medium, is hereby permitted provided that the reproduction is accurate and is not presented as official. This permission does not extend to reproduction, distribution or use for commercial purpose of financial gain. Reproduction or use outside this permission or without authorization may be treated as copyright infringement in accordance with the Copyright Act. Authorization may be obtained on written application to the Office of the Speaker of the House of Commons.

Reproduction in accordance with this permission does not constitute publication under the authority of the House of Commons. The absolute privilege that applies to the proceedings of the House of Commons does not extend to these permitted reproductions. Where a reproduction includes briefs to a committee of the House of Commons, authorization for reproduction may be required from the authors in accordance with the Copyright Act.

Nothing in this permission abrogates or derogates from the privileges, powers, immunities and rights of the House of Commons and its committees. For greater certainty, this permission does not affect the prohibition against impeaching or questioning the proceedings of the House of Commons in courts or otherwise. The House of Commons retains the right and privilege to find users in contempt of Parliament if a reproduction or use is not in accordance with this permission.

---

Also available on the House of Commons website at the following address: <https://www.ourcommons.ca>

Publié en conformité de l'autorité  
du Président de la Chambre des communes

### **PERMISSION DU PRÉSIDENT**

---

Les délibérations de la Chambre des communes et de ses comités sont mises à la disposition du public pour mieux le renseigner. La Chambre conserve néanmoins son privilège parlementaire de contrôler la publication et la diffusion des délibérations et elle possède tous les droits d'auteur sur celles-ci.

Il est permis de reproduire les délibérations de la Chambre et de ses comités, en tout ou en partie, sur n'importe quel support, pourvu que la reproduction soit exacte et qu'elle ne soit pas présentée comme version officielle. Il n'est toutefois pas permis de reproduire, de distribuer ou d'utiliser les délibérations à des fins commerciales visant la réalisation d'un profit financier. Toute reproduction ou utilisation non permise ou non formellement autorisée peut être considérée comme une violation du droit d'auteur aux termes de la Loi sur le droit d'auteur. Une autorisation formelle peut être obtenue sur présentation d'une demande écrite au Bureau du Président de la Chambre des communes.

La reproduction conforme à la présente permission ne constitue pas une publication sous l'autorité de la Chambre. Le privilège absolu qui s'applique aux délibérations de la Chambre ne s'étend pas aux reproductions permises. Lorsqu'une reproduction comprend des mémoires présentés à un comité de la Chambre, il peut être nécessaire d'obtenir de leurs auteurs l'autorisation de les reproduire, conformément à la Loi sur le droit d'auteur.

La présente permission ne porte pas atteinte aux privilèges, pouvoirs, immunités et droits de la Chambre et de ses comités. Il est entendu que cette permission ne touche pas l'interdiction de contester ou de mettre en cause les délibérations de la Chambre devant les tribunaux ou autrement. La Chambre conserve le droit et le privilège de déclarer l'utilisateur coupable d'outrage au Parlement lorsque la reproduction ou l'utilisation n'est pas conforme à la présente permission.

---

Aussi disponible sur le site Web de la Chambre des communes à l'adresse suivante :  
<https://www.noscommunes.ca>